



# The Carmens of Chicago



A Corner of the factory

**I**f the cigaret girl of Europe, who drifts to Chicago, can find a situation in her new home where she can continue her cigaret rolling, she considers herself lucky. The shops in which the hand made article is still produced are few and far between. A couple out in Milwaukee-avenue, and a few here and there in Halsted street, and two down in the heart of the Ghetto in a block in Jefferson street, are all that is left of the dwindling hand made cigaret industry, which once flourished in Chicago.

If the newly arrived Jewish or Yiddish maiden, who is usually an accomplished cigaret roller at 16, cannot get one of these places, she learns tailoring and goes into the sweatshops.

As compared with the life in the sweatshops that in the cigaret factory is one of ease and luxury.

### Soon Leaves Shop to Become Wife.

There is another thing which makes the cigaret girl the envy of all the other workers in the Ghetto. She is not in the factory long before she becomes a wife. And to be married early and become the mother of sons is the ambition which the true Jewish maiden of this class contemplates with religious, as well as romantic, fervor.

It is the complaint of the cigaret manufacturer more than any other employer, that his girls "are not long with him." Two years are the most he can generally keep one, he says, and if he gets one who is an especially good worker, or who is prettier or brighter than the average, he does not keep her a year probably. "She want to get married," says the Israelite, nodding his head toward the girls, who do not protest, except to smile and work the faster to cover their embarrassment.

It is easily seen why the cigaret-maker readily changes her estate for that of the Jewish wife. Perhaps of all the places in the Ghetto, the tobacco shops with their clear fragrance, are the least repellant. With their unfinished wood interiors and all the variety of tobacco merchandise in the same harmony of color, capped by the gay labels, there is



Rolling Cigaretts

### A Chicago Carmen

something of the picturesque. At least, the low collared and dingy little shop, is an oasis which it is a relief to turn into, in the Ghetto.

### Customers Fascinated by Bright Eyes.

Added to this, when after accustoming one's eyes to the dimness, one sees a fine wire screen partitioned off across the rear of the little shop, there is a sense of the fascinating and mysterious, in gradually making out that there are bright, dark eyes gleaming through it, with curious looks—looks which do not hinder in any way the swiftly flying fingers at work.

The half veiled sight of the cigaret girl which the screen affords does not lessen in any sense her attractions. And when there also float out from behind the screen strains of the melody of a Russian folk song, the heart of the Jew, whether he be old or young, who comes here for his Russian cigaret, is easily captured.

The cigaret girl sings because she is happy. On the friendliest terms with her employer, who is shrewdly alive to the attractions of the manufacturing side to his establishment, the girls are encouraged to sing at their work. The story of one girl by a voice like a Carmen is told by her

employer. "But she last not at all," said he. "She sing so sweet she get married too soon."

### Fingers Fly All Day Long.

If this is so, however, there are always those who are ready to take her place. She works under especially favorable conditions. Her screen protects her to some extent from the dust and dirt. Where she sits the light and air are shared impartially with the rest of the little shop. She does not have to breathe the dust that kills, slowly but surely, as it is inhaled by the worker over the shoddy goods, in the sweatshops. And although she makes but \$8 to \$10 a week, the best she can do at the rate of from 70 to 90 cents a thousand, it is far better than the average girl worker, and affords many a bit of neck and hair finery with which she adds to her attractions.

To make 2,000 cigarettes a day, however, requires the utmost dexterity, and a never flagging speed kept up usually through six days of the week except the Saturday, or the Jewish Sunday. Unlike the cigarmaker of New York, she is not compelled to rest on Sunday and is glad to add the extra sum to a wage which is considerably below the New York average. Although she can make both kinds, she usually works on the "Russian cigaret" or that with the mouthpiece, which is in demand in the district. A little piece of paper the length of the tube is glued at one edge to the bench at which she sits. With a rapidity which the eye can scarcely follow, she lays the piece of tissue paper which is already cut on this, drops a pinch of tobacco on it, rolls it instantly by means of the little paper roller, and with one and the same motion crowds in the tobacco and fits on the mouthpiece. The scissors then snip off the protruding tobacco, and the tube is laid straight with the rest of the pile.

### Radiant at Her Night School.

When it is considered that her day is made up of long hours of this toil, and that she never flags in the greatest

witness that it is possible for the eye and hand to execute, the appearance of the cigaret girl as she comes out arrayed for the evening's recreation is a matter of astonishment. Her eyes shine and she is radiant with delight, not because she is ready for gaieties popularly supposed to be affected by her kind, but because she is going to night school. This charming place to which come most of the young people in the neighborhood, and where she will learn to "speak the English," is the goal to which the lately arrived nicotine worker turns with the rest of her countrymen.

Until she has learned to speak, this is the greatest delight she knows, and the wildness usually associated with her class is entirely lacking. The most of her earnings she gives dutifully to her father and mother, while as to smoking, a Jewish cigaret girl who would smoke a cigaret herself, would be a horror to all her countrymen in the Ghetto.

### Devoted to Her Leader of Fashion.

Only in the fact that she has a taste for gay clothes and has bright eyes, which she can use tellingly, is she anything like the famous Carmen. In her pompadour and the extravagance of her hair, as she has it arranged in the evening, is also a suggestion of the real Carmen, and the wonderful way in which she has grasped the secrets of fashionable hair-dressing is a revelation to those who remember that the cigaret girl is only a year or two from Europe. In other things, too, in her shirtwaists and collars, and in her general style, this little immigrant when dressed in her best, is not unlike the average shop girl. Strange as this seems, especially when contrasted with the dress of the older Jewish women, it is explained by a curious fact.

For the young woman of the Ghetto, there is a glorious leader of fashion, a person who is closely watched and reverently imitated. It is the beautiful heroine who plays at the neighboring theaters, and whose every new trick of hairdressing, or wearing her tie, her hat, or her belt, is copied with all possible speed through the Ghetto.



ROBBING THE DEVIL OF POWER.

## FROM NEAR AND FAR.



On Aug. 1 each year the people of Val di Rose, in rural Italy, gather in the public square and elect the most intelligent man to officiate at the exorcising of the devil. An effigy of the evil one is attached to a fire balloon and liberated, after which the peasantry believe they will be free from malign influence for the rest of the year.

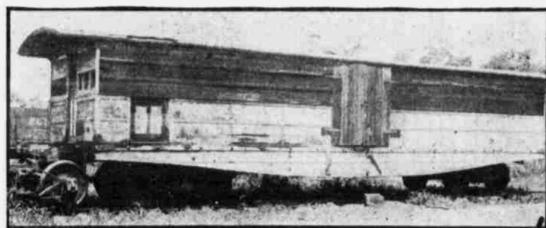
AUTO HANDCAR.



Railroad track inspectors are beginning to use this type of automobile in looking over the roadbed.



Russian mine taken by the Japanese from the harbor at Newchwang.



EARLY PASSENGER COACH.

This passenger coach, known as the "shad belly," was one of the first ever run in the United States.

HUCKLEJEE BREAD.



Hucklejee bread is a game our grandfathers used to play when they were children. The player sat down on a cushion, clasped his hands about his knees, and at a one! two! and three! rolled over. The trick is to sit up again without unclasping the hands.

FITTED BY PROXY.



A dentist of Bordeaux did not feel that he could leave his business long enough to go to Paris and have the new spectacles that he needed fitted to his nose, which was of a peculiar shape. But he hit upon the ingenious scheme of having a mask of his face made, and sending it to the optician, together with the numbers of the lenses that he used.

A MARINE GRAVEYARD.



At this spot in Cleveland, O., great lake craft of many descriptions find their harbor.

PRAIRIE DOG.



Advance of civilization is decreasing the numbers of prairie dogs.



COLLAPSIBLE THEATER HAT.

A collapsible theater hat, that may be folded into a minute space, and when necessary will reassume its former symmetry, has been invented by a London milliner for the benefit of her sex. The hat, which has been patented, is made on an ingenious framework, which can be covered with pliable straw, chiffon, lace, or cloth—indeed, any material save velvet, which would crush too much.



to be of service. It can also be modeled in any shape to suit any style of beauty.

MARRIAGE ARCH.



The marriage arch is an important and conspicuous feature of a Negro wedding. At one stage of the elaborate ceremony, the bridegroom is expected to seize his dusky bride and carry her in his arms up a difficult bamboo ladder to a high platform surmounted by wickets of bamboo.

ESPARTO GRASS.



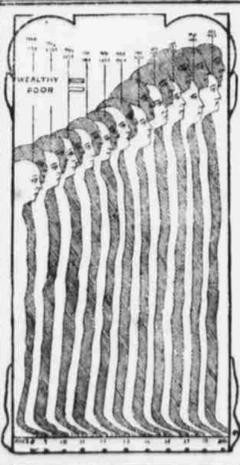
From esparto grass, grown in southern Europe and Spain, are manufactured printing paper, cordage, shoes, matting, baskets, net-mattresses, etc. Espartero, the celebrated Spanish bull fighter, was so called because his father was a dealer in this grass.

NEW HONOR MEDAL.



Maj. Gen. George L. Gillespie, assistant to the chief of staff of the army, has been granted a patent on the design for the new medal of honor. This is the final step to be taken by the officials of the war department to insure the exclusive use of this particular design to veterans who, by their valor on the field of battle, merited high distinction and were decorated by their country with the medal of honor.

STATURE OF ITALIANS.



Prof. Pagliani, an Italian anthropologist, has made a study of the comparative physical development of the rich and the poor among his countrymen. This chart, showing the average stature of both classes, reveals that the odds are in favor of the rich in infancy, and that they assume a constant advance after the age of 13, when the poor begin hard manual labor.

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